



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

Fact Sheet on the “Remembrance, Responsibility and the Future” Foundation

The United States government played a critical role in a multilateral effort that has resulted in the establishment of a Foundation under German law entitled, “Remembrance, Responsibility and the Future.” The German Foundation is capitalized with DM 10 billion (approximately \$4.4 billion) for approximately one million eligible claimants. The Foundation is making dignified payments to survivors in recognition of the suffering they endured as slave and forced laborers and also covers other personal injury claims and certain property loss or damage caused by German companies during the National Socialist era, including claims against German banks and insurance companies.

Since June 2001, payments totaling approximately US\$1.15 billion (1.29 billion Euro) have been made to 662,550 surviving slave and forced laborers. This represents 32% of the funds available from the Foundation’s capital for labor slave and forced labor payments. The remaining funds will continue to be paid out over the next two years.

Victims’ interests were broadly and vigorously represented throughout the negotiations that led to the creation of the Foundation. Class action lawyers and representatives of victims’ groups in the United States, Israel and Central and Eastern Europe fully and actively participated in the discussions that led to the creation of the Foundation, signed a Joint Statement at the conclusion of the negotiations, and accepted the Foundation as a valid and worthy result. The class action lawyers who participated in the negotiations agreed to dismiss any Nazi era lawsuits pending against German companies. The United States and the Federal Republic of Germany signed an Executive Agreement which committed Germany to operate the Foundation under the principles to which the parties to the negotiations had agreed, and committed the United States to take certain steps to assist German companies in achieving “legal peace” in the United States for claims arising out of the National Socialist era and World War II.

During the course of the negotiations, the President concluded that it would be in the United States’ foreign policy interests for the “Remembrance, Responsibility and Future” Foundation to be the exclusive forum and remedy for the resolution of all claims against German companies arising out of the Nazi era and the Second World War. The U.S. Government filed statements of interest recommending dismissal on any valid legal ground in court cases brought against German companies for wrongs committed during the Nazi era, and committed to do so in future cases that would be covered by the Foundation agreement.

Documents on the Foundation are available on the Internet at:

<http://www.usembassy.de/policy/holocaust>

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